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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 001112

SIPDIS

NEA/ARP, NEA/RA

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KNNP](#) [IR](#) [KU](#)

SUBJECT: KUWAIT PM RAISED NUCLEAR CONCERNS DURING TRIP TO  
TEHRAN

REF: A. STATE 120288

[1](#)B. KUWAIT 1107

Classified By: Political Counselor Pete O'Donohue for reasons 1.4 b and  
d

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: The GOK maintains a consistent position regarding Iran's nuclear program and that is that Iran has the right of any state to pursue a peaceful, transparent civilian energy program, but does not have the right to develop a program with military applications, according to MFA's Iran desk officer. Kuwait's PM emphasized this point during a November 21-22 visit to Tehran, according to the MFA source, and Kuwait remains supportive of IC, IAEA and P5 1 efforts to bring Iran into compliance with international safeguards. The MFA desk officer also emphasized that a primary purpose of the PM's visit to Tehran was to allay tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia ahead of the Kuwait-hosted December GCC Summit. He acknowledged that Kuwait and Iran signed two "generic" MOU's pertaining to commercial and electricity/water cooperation, but details remain to be worked out. Kuwait's Amir may visit Tehran over the coming year in his capacity as GCC chair, with an aim to "stabilizing" Iran-GCC relations. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Political Counselor on November 24 raised Ref A points concerning U.S. posture on Iran's nuclear program with MFA Asia Department Counselor Rashid Al-Hajri, who covers Iran issues. Al-Hajri assured PolCouns that the GOK's policy regarding Iran's nuclear program remains consistent -- the GOK accepts the right of any state to develop a peaceful, transparent program for energy and other civilian purposes, but opposes any development of a program in the region for military purposes. Al-Hajri added that the GOK stands ready to work with the IC to encourage Iran to abide by IAEA and other international safeguards and to do so in a spirit of transparency and dialogue.

[1](#)3. (C) Adding further context to Kuwait Prime Minister Shaykh Nasser Al-Sabah's November 21-22 visit to Tehran, accompanied by a senior GOK delegation (ref B), Al-Hajri stated that the PM had made a point of reiterating to his Iranian interlocutors that Iran "must" work with the international community, particularly the P5 1 and the IAEA, to provide assurances that its nuclear program is intended for peaceful civilian purposes and does not have military applications. Al-Hajri denied a report (noted ref B) that the PM had conveyed to the Iranians a message from Russian FM Lavrov urging the Iranians to accept a nuclear fuel deal now on the table, commenting that the Russians have "strong" relations with Iran and did not need Kuwait to transmit its messages.

[1](#)4. (C) Al-Hajri confirmed, as suggested Ref B, that a primary goal of the PM's trip to Tehran was to "smooth the waters" ahead of the GCC Summit that Kuwait will host December 14-16; the visit to Tehran gave the GOK an opportunity to hear the

Iranian point of view on the whole spectrum of regional issues and to provide the reciprocal GOK and, to some extent, GCC view on these same issues. Al-Hajri noted that the PM had specifically urged Iran to undertake efforts to resolve ongoing tensions with Saudi Arabia by using "more moderate language" and by ceasing its support for the Houthis in Yemen; he also called on them to refrain from interfering with the Hajj. Al-Hajri said the PM urged Tehran to send its Foreign Minister to Riyadh to resolve common problems peacefully and anticipated that this might occur soon.

15. (C) Al-Hajri also confirmed that two Kuwait-Iran MOUs had been signed during the PM's stay in Tehran, one on commercial and economic cooperation and a second on electricity and water. Al-Hajri said the MOU's were "very generic" with details to be worked out later. The MOU's, he added, "could" facilitate investment opportunities for Iranian business in Kuwait.

16. (C) Queried on press reports that the Amir is expected to follow up the PM's visit with a trip to Iran in "coming months", Al-Hajri acknowledged that Iran has pushed hard for this. He noted that the Amir "may" carry out such a visit over the coming year in his capacity as GCC chair, with the aim of stabilizing overall GCC-Iran relations. No date has been set for such a visit, however, and the timing would depend on further assessments of cross-Gulf relations further down the road.

17. (C) Comment: Al-Hajri's comments ring true and are consistent with Embassy's sense that the GOK -- with its stature riding on a successful outcome for the December GCC

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Summit -- viewed the PM's visit as a way to leverage better behavior out of the Iranians during the coming months. The visit also had the effect of burnishing the PM's diplomatic credentials, while throwing the Iranians a few bones -- the "generic" MOUs -- that may or may not amount to much but which allow the Iranians to look less isolated. The GOK, as Al-Hajri acknowledged, remains deeply concerned about Iran's nuclear program and will have viewed the PM's visit as an opportunity to reiterate their concerns while playing the role of regional mediator and peacemaker. The Amir may well choose to follow up on this trajectory, if circumstances prove favorable. End Comment.

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